NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07954836 2

867

THE

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PRESENTED BY

Rev. Wilton Merle Smith

29 August 1917

Hutton
ZET

THE WINDS OF GOD

"The time you regret (the eighteenth century) certainly had exceptional merits, which I appreciate as fully as you do; but still, we must admit that underneath this society which was so well balanced, so well ordered, and apparently so select, there existed the very same sorrows and disorders as in our own. I see here many memoirs of that time, but of course I do not know which of them you have read or not read, and consequently I feel slightly embarrassed."

"Oh," she said simply, "I know what you mean quite well. I have not read everything here; but I have read enough to know that my ancient friend had their passions, their weaknesses, their errors just like the people of to-day. But, as my father used to say, all these were founded upon a serious and solid basis which always righted itself. Great faults were committed, but there was also great repentance. There existed an upper sphere where everything came right in the end—even wickedness."

OCTAVE FEUILLET, *La Mort.*

THE WINDS OF GOD

FIVE LECTURES ON THE INTERCOURSE OF THOUGHT WITH FAITH DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY THE REV.
JOHN A. HUTTON, M.A.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
NEW YORK AND LONDON

1911
L58

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
821698
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1917 L

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury, England.

NOTE

The five lectures which form this small book were spoken, with additions, at Mundesley in Norfolk, to a gathering chiefly of ministers, who received them with an extraordinary friendliness. It is in response to their urgent wish that, with some reluctance, I have agreed to let them be printed.

Had I begun to make the changes in style and manner which this new intention properly required, I should have been led on and on, perhaps, to a total reconstruction. I have decided therefore to let the words as they were spoken stand, without such adjustment or qualification.

J. A. H.

Glasgow, 1911.

THE WINDS OF GOD

I

I CAN recall very clearly—for it is an hour that I have many times gone back to—the circumstances in which our dear friend Dr. Morgan felt moved to ask me to come here. It was a beautiful night in August of last year. Our day's work at Northfield was over, and some of us before we should retire for the night had gone out upon the piazza. It was such a night of stars that even the far distances were quite luminous. We could see the fall in the landscape through which the Connecticut flows, and the hills of Vermont round Brattleboro' to the North.

I cannot speak of the blessings which come to the good people who in thousands go to Northfield to listen. I do know something of the blessing which comes

to men who go there now and then to speak.

If, as may very well be maintained, the chief business of our life here in this world is that in the course of it we learn to need and learn to form high friendships, and the highest Friendship; if we are here to learn how much we may come to need one another, and to love one another, and at length to miss one another, so that our bereaved heart may cry out beyond the apparent tragedy of death and comfort itself by the faith of Jesus Christ—if all that is the very function of life, then Northfield has been for me a great means of grace, a great means of accomplishing within myself that holy intention.

There we sat and talked, or rather I should say there we sat and communed with one another, and with all things, feeling in that far-off land what Wordsworth had felt for all elect souls in our Westmoreland, the "Presence which disturbs us with the joy of elevated thoughts,

the sense sublime of Something far more deeply interfused, whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean, and the living air, and the blue sky, and in the mind of man." Truly as Jean Paul says, "No day should close without a look at the stars."

I cannot recall now how it was that our talk took the line it did take, though I can readily suppose how it was. We must have been feeling what the writer of the eighth Psalm felt as he stood beneath the stars, knowing as much about them as we with all our knowledge know. We must have been feeling, as he felt, the contrast, the pitiful contrast, if our faith be not true, the contrast between man with his brief term of life, a term which short as it is is often not permitted to complete itself, and this immense world which is his home, which was his cradle, and shall be his grave. "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy hands, the moon, and the stars . . . what is man, that Thou art mindful of him,

or the son of man that Thou shouldest take the trouble to look in upon him." I have no doubt it was there we began—uttering the great misgiving of the century to which we belong: and beginning there, we talked far on into the night.

It was as we found our way in the darkness to our rooms that my good friend took my arm and asked me if I would come some day and say to his people at Mundesley some of the things that had come to me there and then. And so I am here.

I do not know whether I shall be able to catch the glow and insight of that evening. A fine feeling for one's subject is the gift of God; and it may be that as I set out upon my task, with no spirit of self-seeking, but wishing only to speak with entire openness to men who are with me in the ministry of Christ's Church, and who share with me the common perplexity and the common hope, it may be that God in His kindness will send that wind behind me, that ful-

ness and resource to my own soul, that something more than my own power and wisdom, which to men like ourselves who are called upon to think and to utter our thoughts makes all the blessed difference between a hard task and a joyful service, between difficult words which, strive as they may, always fall short, and words which leap as they go, for they have a meaning and power beyond themselves.

When I was asked a few months ago to specify with some detail the subjects with which I proposed to deal, I sat down and tried to project my mind over the field which I wished to cover. I replied that my general subject might be called " The cry of our time for its ancient peace," and that in my treatment of the subject I should dwell upon certain aspects of the mind or soul of the times in which we live.

I saw clearly that what I was thinking about as the matter which I wished to bring out before any audience that trusted me, was the general unsettlement

in matters of faith, the disturbance and trouble and uneasiness, and the consequent impotence for great enterprises for the time being, which have come upon us; and how already the general soul is crying out—as, indeed, all the time it has been crying out—for something which it misses, something which it believes our fathers possessed, something which is of such a kind that we are not complete, not happy, not strong, not ourselves, not men, without it.

Now the time in which we live, simply because it is a time when sensitive souls are here and there at a loss, feeling the strain of questions and misgivings for which they have no firm and honourable answer, is a time with a very subtle peril and temptation of its own. I mean the danger that these sensitive and religious souls be hurried, or themselves rush in a kind of panic, into some merely retrograde and unthinking course. This is, in fact, what has already happened in certain movements of our time to which

great numbers of people have attached themselves, from Neo-Catholicism and Christian Science (to name the more worthy tendencies) to Theosophy and the Occult (to name the baser sort).

It is an old observation, that extremes meet; and an age which exalts the understanding unduly is sure to witness the rise of superstition and credulity. The fact is, when true religion goes out of the window, something subterranean will come up from the basement, from the drains. If Samuel will refuse to see Saul, that distracted man will certainly have dealings with the witch. For religion is an integral constituent of the human soul: it is an essential of human nature, and as Meredith said, "If you try to drown human nature, it is sure to come up again, and not with its *head* first!"

There is no need for such craven courses. There is need for sobriety and a kind of wakeful confidence in God. There is no test of theories like the test of time. The

Pragmatists, if they have not the whole truth, have something of it when they declare that one proof that a thing is true is that it *works*, it fits the case, it stands up to the challenge of life.

I propose then, in the few mornings that we can spare each other, to deal with the general mood of our time as we feel it and react against it who stand for the great tradition of Christian belief.

After a good deal of thinking, of choosing and rejecting, I have settled upon a method to which I hope I may have your hearty assent. I am going to ask you to accompany me down through the main channel of the characteristic thinking of last century as it bears upon our fixed beliefs.

We may be able to see more exactly where we are if we see more clearly the way by which we have come.

There is a game in which I sometimes indulge: I do myself an injustice, however, in speaking of that game as an indulgence; as I play it, it is more of a

discipline. In the course of that game it is not an unusual thing for me to lose a ball. Now a ball to-day is a thing of value. After looking for a lost ball for a time, and becoming more and more depressed, I have again and again succeeded in recovering it by a method which is really the method of these lectures. I have stopped looking for it at the place near which I thought it was lying. I have gone back to the tee. Standing there, I have taken a new observation. In imagination I make my stroke again, in imagination I follow the flight of the ball; and then with a firm step I go that way. I have found something which was lost by looking for it, not in the place where it lay, but from the place where it began to be lost, where it began to go wrong. Just so, I am hoping to stand along with you for a little on the threshold of the present tract of time and thought, to see along with you the very circumstances in which certain words, certain ways of looking at things have

come into being—words and ways of looking at things which to-day have penetrated every region of life and have given us not only our task, but our very tools. For we must speak to an age in its own language. We need not accept its conclusions. It may be our very business to withstand its conclusions; but even this we must do by the use of words and categories which the age acknowledges as valid. Or,—and this brings me to the very threshold of what we are to be doing in these lectures,—in every age—and the only age we are responsible for is our own—we must meet whatever seems to be against God in its thought and point of view with the very speech which in that same age God has given to His chosen vessels.

For "God hath not left Himself without witness" in every age, and notably He has never left Himself without witness to a people which has once upon a time opened to Him its heart to its last depths.

The century which has just passed, the

century to which we belong, saw indeed the rise of the scientific spirit. It witnessed the revolt of the human understanding against all manner of accepted things in Church and State. And much of all that, we or our children will yet perceive as having come from God, conveying a great blessing to mankind. But along with that indirect blessing from God in the very science and spirit of inquiry of the century, there was given such a positive revelation in the wealth of spiritual ideas, in the wealth of great counter-balancing ideas, in the warmth and quickening of the human heart, in the deepening of the human soul, not to speak of the floods of new life which have refreshed the churches, that I do not know where to look for another equal space of time in which God has so manifested Himself.

It is one corroboration of my faith in the overruling Spirit of God that wherever there is action, there is reaction. There is, it would appear, a way by which we

men must go, and when we strain towards one side, we are sooner or later pulled up from within ourselves. In the case of every people which has once seen the Face of God, every powerful mood has already a touch of its opposite. The world of the spirit, like the world which we inhabit, is a sphere, and though man may rush away from his appointed place, he is doomed to return. On the great and tragical scale of things, for man to be rushing from the Face of God is all the time to be rushing into His arms—though by a long course, so long that when at length the prodigal returns, he can do no other than sink upon his Father's breast.

This, we know, was the faith, the daily and habitual point of view, of our Lord with regard to men. This, if we may be permitted to interpret His self-consciousness, was the ground of that wonderful quietness and sureness in which, as in all else, He is so entirely beyond us. "He knew what was in man," and He knew

that it is never so certain that man will come back as in the day when he goes away with some violence. He knew that God is that shadow of man from which none can leap clear. As in the great parable, man may one day be visited by a profound restlessness, by a restlessness so great and masterful that he is ready on the strength of it to leave the shelter of long-established things and make a fresh experiment in living. He may set out to test once again what are the final foundations and necessities of his soul. He may even try to do without God. But for Jesus, there was no ground for despair in all that; there was only reason upon reason for patience, for faith and hope and love. There was only the greater necessity for people like ourselves who still dwell in the old home to keep a light in the window facing the lonely moor, in the window facing the bitter sea—the lonely moor and the bitter sea by which unhappy souls at length come back. And that I foresee is going to be the conclu-

sion to which all my words shall lead. The Kingdom of God cometh not with argument. Still more certainly, it cometh not with angry argument, or by the language of threatening. "How shall Satan cast out Satan?" The only force that can cast out an evil spirit is the force of pure goodness. The only effective proof of God is an entirely good man. The one thing which will recall this wild and disorderly time of ours in which, beneath the surface, the heart is craving for its lost peace, is the vision of happy communities of good people here and there and everywhere, communities of people who are satisfied with God and with the way of Jesus Christ, people whose quiet manners and healthy minds, whose willingness to undertake the great human responsibilities, the bearing and care of children, will be signs to the whole world, acting upon the careless and hostile ones like the secret pressure of God Himself.

I am going to ask you then to accompany me down through the century to

which we belong, whose children according to the spirit as truly as according to the flesh we are. I want you, if I may say so, to give me your careful attention, even if that should involve something of a strain. I like that saying of Benjamin Whichcote, a Cambridge divine of the seventeenth century, whom Cromwell so greatly respected that he did not interfere with him—I like that saying of his, "Religion stands to Reason." There can be no final disharmony between thought and things, between faith and knowledge, between science and religion. If there is any apparent disharmony it must either be our knowledge that is wrong or our faith that is not deep and pure enough. I say not deep enough; for God often permits the surface and outworks of our faith to be threatened and even to fall in order to drive us away from the circumference to the centre and heart of the whole matter.

I am quite sure that, God helping us, we shall be the better for our study.

There are two high results, and if we do not secure them I shall have failed. For one thing, when we have finished our study and look back we shall have, I hope, a fresh understanding of what it means to believe in the living God, to believe in a God Who is still doing something. We shall see how wonderfully God has rebuked the age out of its own mouth, how He has raised cautionary voices to keep the soul well in the middle of the path. We shall see how, for example, a century of science has also been a century of poetry, and of poetry which in every line has been concerned with the faith. We might see too, if we had time to glance that way, how the great line of spiritual poets has been supported by an equal line of spiritual painters. We might hear not only what I am bold enough to call the Word of God by the mouth of His servants Tennyson and Browning, and in their different degrees Clough and Arnold; but the same Word of the Lord in substance by the brush of

His servants G. F. Watts and Holman Hunt.

It may be that we have impoverished ourselves and have shown a want of proper gratitude to God by our neglect of the great insights into and corroborations of our faith which He has been pleased to give in our very day.

Of course there is a risk, I know, in asking preachers to acquaint themselves with the great literature of their century as a contribution to and safeguard of the Catholic faith. But there is worse than a risk in preachers not being acquainted with it, there is the certainty of a positive limitation to their power and usefulness.

We must not make up our minds to abandon the educated classes. We must be on our guard against playing into the hands of Ultramontanism and superstition, by seeming to evacuate the whole field of learning, by consenting to a divorce between faith and knowledge. I am not proposing to ask you to learn poetry for

purposes of preaching. Nothing so tires me as to hear poets quoted by preachers when I would rather hear their own mind on some matter. And as for preaching on poets, and taking texts from poets, when a man might be dealing with the final words of Holy Scripture, and with its tragic background for his support—it is a great waste of time and missing of an opportunity.

What I am advocating is that we see together how God has been helping us, how in our day He has awakened misgivings, sorrows, a new sensitiveness by which, as by restraining and inviting voices, He would keep the human soul true to its highest destiny.

And another thing we shall feel which makes for a new and happy confidence in God: it is this. As we take some part in the spiritual travail of this century, it will be sure to dawn upon us that in a sense we men and women are but spectators, but vessels, agents, instruments, of the Eternal Spirit, of some One beyond

us, Who is carrying out some great movement and supporting His side in some tremendous controversy: that in truth we no longer live, but Christ lives in us.

From where I sit writing these words I look out upon a line of hills. In an hour or two the sun will set. Stars will be born out of the dusk, and all the majesty of the night will appear. And so the days and nights go on. And what I feel is that out there even in the world of nature something is going on which is using everything simply as means for its own expression. Whatever it is that is taking place, I can either use it or I can neglect it. I may link myself to the majesty of things, and thus give my own feeble life some greatness, or I may shut out the vision and live my mortal life even as a cow eats grass—without any sense of the horizon. So through the world of ideas, of thoughts, of new and increasing knowledge, the great God is moving, and it is to miss something of what He has prepared for me if I refuse to observe the way of His going.

There is a wonderful insight in a paper of Huxley's which I recall from a distant memory. Wonderful, I call it, for it is an insight forced upon one who was not inclined by his temperament or by the rôle he chose for himself, to be credulous. He says that in this life of ours deeply considered, it seems to him as though we are engaged each of us upon a game of chess, and opposite to each of us there sits the unseen Player. We make our move, and He the unseen One adapts His play to the new situation; and thus we live. At every moment the mysterious Player knows what is passing in our mind and all the time we feel that He wishes us not to fail. Well, the same is true of the life of any people like our own into whose midst God has, as a matter of history, come. Beneath the surface of the life of such a people fine eyes will see that its mental toil is no accidental thing, but rather that within it all there is the Effort and Pressure of God.

II

Let me begin by recalling to your memory Matthew Arnold's definition of poetry. Poetry, Mr. Arnold defined as "the criticism of life." Whether or not that is an exhaustive definition, I shall not pause to consider; but I find it a very fruitful one within limits. The poets according to this definition are those elect spirits who, by virtue of their sensitiveness, are able to detect influences in the atmosphere which ordinary people are able, indeed, to recognise once they have been reproduced in words, but which they might never have been able to perceive for themselves. The poets in this view are those who, because of their delicacy, react upon the prevailing temper of their time, it may be sympathetically, giving it additional force and preparing a welcome for it in the

common mind of the people; or it may be with hostility, protesting against the mood of an age in the name of something ancient, primitive, and precious in the nature or heart of men. I have not sufficient knowledge to enable me to say whether Arnold's definition will be found to apply to the literature of other countries; it certainly applies to the literature of our own, and very forcibly to the literature of the century which has just closed.

It is one of M. Taine's luminous insights to have observed that in England (and the same is true of Germany), as opposed to the case of France, the higher literature has always remained in close touch with the people. We are a practical people even in our literature and art.

> Englishmen have a special craving which, with them, is national . . . they desire that literature shall contribute to . . . the amelioration of man and society. They ask from it the glorification of virtue and the chastisement of vice. They send it . . . to learn the means of remedying abuses, succouring injuries, avoiding temptations. . . . A singular work which has not its equal in all history because in all history there has been no society like it, which, middling to lovers of the

beautiful, admirable to lovers of the useful, offers, in the countless variety of its painting and the invariable fixity of its spirit, the picture of the only democracy which knows how to sustain and govern and reform itself.

Yielding for one moment to a metaphor which is suggested by the physical life of our bodies—when a germ enters our system, threatening our life or our well-being, immediately an army of corpuscles (phagocytes) is mobilised and told off to deal with the intruder. They surround the enemy and in a healthy organism kill it or cast it out, or they kill it and absorb it. In any case, they take the element of death or danger out of it, and annex what is left. The poets are the vanguard of that army which a long-settled and spiritual community puts into the field to do battle with any idea or theory or point of view or fashion which seems to threaten some precious interest of man or of society.

It was a sign that whatever be our condition to-day, British human nature was during the greater part of the nine-

teenth century still sound and normal, compact of body and spirit, that a period which saw the rise of the scientific spirit saw at the same time and as a parallel movement the rise of such a fountain of poetry and imagination and faith as has never been equalled within such limits of time.

Looking back over the late century with the detachment and fairness which our brief distance from it secures for us, we see how difficult it would be to say whether the nineteenth century was characterised by the spirit of science or by the spirit of poetry; whether it dealt more with the seen and temporal or with the unseen and eternal; whether it will be known to posterity as an age of reason or as an age of faith. The fact is, it was both. It was the one because it was the other.

Because human nature in those days was normal and sound, it came to pass that when scientific categories threatened to push their claims, as it was felt, unduly, there was an immediate, and instinctive, and tumultuous outpouring from the more

ancient depths of the human soul in poetry and the language of faith. And so it happens that probably no single century is so just to the diverse nature of man as is the nineteenth, paying respect as it does to man's thirst for truth, for the light of knowledge, but paying equal respect, and paying it with a tenderness which betrays indeed a prejudice, to man's unquenchable thirst for peace, for faith, for the sense of an ultimate security in God.

Looking back over the controversies of that time, one sees what an honourable struggle it all was, and how both sides were contending equally for something vital to the human soul. We see, too, that there could have been no ultimate cynicism, no contempt for human nature, no diabolical amusement at existence as such—a thing which has since emerged—in men who fought with such energy for the fair name of man and for his freedom, on the one hand to *think*, and on the other hand to *believe*. The battle did not begin in the nineteenth century—there is no

absolute beginning in the history of thought—nor is the battle over now that the century has passed. But I venture to say that the nineteenth century will be found to have given the classical expression to the controversy between man's head and man's heart, will be found to have done justice to the case on either side, will be found to have anticipated in principle all that will ever be able to be urged, and finally will be found to have arrived at the only honourable and lasting terms of peace.

For, by its intellectual energy on the one side, and its spiritual protests on the other; by its conquests in the region of material things, and by its insight and discovery in the region of the soul; by what science has done and by what it has left to us of sorrow and sin and homesickness of the soul for God, after it has done what it has done; by the material prosperity which it has witnessed and the new and awful loneliness which its very thoughts and point of view have discovered to us; by

the proud place to which it has raised man in view of his intellectual range and by the place of utter and pathetic insignificance to which it has reduced man —if there be not more in man than doth appear; by these contrasted results and moods the century has uttered perhaps the final word on the controversy which it waged manfully almost from its dawn to its close—I mean the controversy between knowledge and belief, between the seen and the unseen, between faith and reason, between science and poetry, between worldliness and the obedience of the Spirit, between man's physical organism as it is played upon by physical conditions and that same organism as it is played upon by laws of inheritance, as it thrills with the vibration of far-off things, as it exults or grieves with hope or fear, as it is capable of incalculable raptures and heroisms under the inspirations of faith and hope and love. And what the century decided upon that ancient controversy, thereby deciding upon the true and

catholic nature of man, may be stated in familiar words of Holy Scripture, " What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

That is the result at which, as I foresee, I should like to arrive, occupying this morning and the next with some account of the conflict and the process. I can foresee also that my mind is being led on to declare that the characteristic controversy in which our faith was deeply engaged reached its height, and all that was involved in the controversy became plain, when Darwin published his *Origin of Species* in the year 1859. Looking back over the century, one sees that the Darwinian hypothesis, covering the field of man's serious thoughts about life, about himself, about society, about God (one sees that that hypothesis), changed everything. Now that the word Evolution has been spoken, thought can never be quite the same. " Evolution " makes a greater total difference than did the Copernican Astronomy. It must have been a terrible

strain on the hearts of simple, believing people, to have to adjust themselves to the conclusions of Copernicus—that this earth of ours, which is so dear, is like a speck of sand for magnitude in comparison with an illimitable universe. That must have been a poignant fact for faith to assimilate. And yet Evolution fills us with even a more terrible disquietude at its first approach: though God will help us to assimilate and master this also, and has already done much to lift up our hearts even in a universe which has become inconceivably immense. For as Chateaubriand says, "The mind of man is equal to the expanse of nature, and all the solitudes of the earth are not too vast for the contemplation of the heart."

You will not expect from me at this time any statement of the Evolutionary Hypothesis, far less any judgment or criticism of it. And this for the very best of reasons. I doubt whether it is possible for any educated man to know less about the Darwinian and later theories of life

and descent than I know. But I do know something. I know what I myself *feel* when I think about life under this new aspect. I know what I feel of new loneliness, of new insignificance, of new terror even. I know that, God helping me, it will never very much affect my belief in Him, or alter the demands my conscience makes upon me. But I can well imagine how this wholly new way of looking at things might affect a man, or affect a generation, and influence the world until the world has arrived at some new catastrophe—a man or generation which for other reasons had ceased to listen to the still small voice of God and to take guidance from the soul of Jesus.

Though I know very little about those theories of life which are associated with the name of Darwin, I know what the greater poets of the nineteenth century thought about them; I know what was the kind of change which these theories were held by them to have made upon their view of God and the world. Like

myself, they may not have known what Darwinism really is. Tennyson did know, for he was a rather exact and industrious student of science. It would be hazardous to say that Robert Browning had no exact understanding of it, for he had an immense power of absorbing all that was salient in any movement; and besides, to a man of his intuition and imagination a hint was all that would have been needed to awaken his mind to all the possibilities, reassuring and sinister alike, which such a theory might involve.

And so I claim to know the scientific movement of the century as it were "in a mirror, darkly," in the mirror of the poets' words and misgivings—sometimes, as it happens, in their new joy, as they reflect upon all that seems to be implied for man in this far-glancing account of his physical origin. When I speak, therefore, as I feel I may be speaking for a little, about the Darwinian Hypothesis, in contrast with the poetry and idealism and faith of the nineteenth century, I

wish to be understood as meaning that whole view of man and nature, that view of man's origin and descent and physical relationships, that theory which uses *exclusively* the words and categories of the material world. It would not be wrong to say that what I mean by Darwinism is the purely scientific account of man and nature and all things in terms of atoms and forces which again are conceived of as having operated through an infinite range of time and within the depths of an infinite space.

And here once again I must ask you in order to understand the spiritual life of the latter half of the century as reflected in its great literature, to go back with me to its very threshold.

So far as England is concerned, the nineteenth century was born in faith and was baptized according to the rites of the Christian Church. It began life as man himself begins life, with a prejudice in favour of the positive and believing view

of things. In support of this, I need only recall to your minds the figures who stood on the threshold of the century, having one foot in the nineteenth and the other in the eighteenth. There was Sir Walter Scott, there was Wordsworth, there was Coleridge; and of lesser but still significant men, Crabbe and Southey, Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb. Robert Burns had just died, but not before he had inaugurated in his own incomparable verse the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century.

Now there are two names there to which I must allude, for in their work we can detect the first rumblings of that profound discontent with things as they are which has been one of the noblest passions of the century, a passion which still sways the heart of our own time. I mean Crabbe and Burns. Crabbe deals with the same materials on the whole as, say, Gray in his *Elegy*, and Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village*; but how differently! Already "there is the sound of a going in

the top of the mulberry trees." In the *Elegy* we are counselled to endure; we are all one in death. Why then vex ourselves with earthly distinctions and disabilities? There is indeed the call to men to be ashamed of the hard yoke they impose upon their fellows. But Gray and Goldsmith have no remedy. The things they deplore are in their view inevitable; they are either according to the will of God, or if that be a sinful explanation, then we may leave it to God to punish hard task-masters and in another world, since not in this, to restore the balance in human lots.

But we cannot read Crabbe without feeling that the human spirit is becoming restive under conditions which it is now beginning to see are not at all according to the will of God but due simply to the hardness of men's hearts. In the poetry of Crabbe there is stuff gathered together which is only waiting for a spark to make a revolution; and Burns, it may very well be, supplied the spark. Burns was

too purely a poet to be directly an incentive to any upheaval for a merely secular improvement; but his sense of man and of nature was so rich, so free, that it was not possible for a generation to sing his verses and catch the glow of his protests and then tamely accept life as it was for the masses of people in that day. That protest against things as they are, that sensitive pain under tryanny which it was Burns's vocation to utter, was the beginning in our language of that cry for a fairer field for man—because he is man—which is to-day the most unanimous cry of our time.

So let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
When sense and worth thro' a' the earth
Shall bear the gree an' a' that.
For a' that an' a' that
It's coming yet for a' that,
When man to man the world o'er
Will brothers be an' a' that.

In saying, as I have said, that the nineteenth century was born in faith, I do not mean to say that the century opened

with a period of unusually settled religious convicitons or that it was free from bitterness or from denial. Probably no age has ever been devoid of misgiving. But it is a fair general statement, to say that by the time the nineteenth century opened, a new *warmth* had crept into the hearts of the greater men. In the wind-chart of the century, the first wind that blew was from the South, bringing heat and showers. It was the month of April in the calendar of the Spirit. The merely critical and intellectual side of the soul had had its innings in the eighteenth century, and by a movement which at any rate with us is inevitable, the other regions of human nature, the unorganised regions, which we may believe were earlier than the reason and which in the great things of life and death are more powerful —these were crying out for expression and for a task.

It was just then that that greatest event of all modern time burst upon the world—I mean the French Revolution.

That great event was hailed—at its outset—by the greater minds of the time as an event altogether on the side of man, and as altogether to his honour. Nay, it was held to be the demonstration, as by a flash of lightning, of the essential nature of the soul—that there is in man an indomitable spirit, a kinship with ideas which cannot for ever be withstood. It is almost incredible to us to-day that William Wordsworth wore in Paris the red cap of the Revolution. Yet he did indeed.

> Good was it in those days to be alive,
> But to be young was very heaven !
> Oh, times !

Sir Walter Scott, perhaps alone of men of his power, stood aloof, and from the beginning suspected the movement in France. Soon Wordsworth joined him. The Reign of Terror provoked in Wordsworth (as it did in Burke) a shudder, and that shudder gave the genius of Wordsworth its subsequent standpoint. The French Revolution, which, as our poets

believed, began in the poetry and imagination and faith of the soul, had ended in gross licentiousness and in the most sordid prose—until human nature, tired of its own unbridled liberty and of the chaos to which unrestricted liberty, liberty without the undertone of God, always tends, invited Napoleon to put it once again in irons.

It is, I venture to think, by keeping our eyes upon the swift and symbolical degradation of the Revolutionary movement, that we can best understand the wave of sadness and disillusionment which passed over our literature just about this time. The finer spirits had supposed that what man needed, and what alone he needed, was to be set free from social tyrannies; that thereafter the essential nature of man, which was assumed to be wonderfully good and innocent, would rise naturally into a beautiful behaviour which man would go on maintaining and making more and more beautiful. Whereas what had happened was that

human nature, let loose from the old feudal restraints, had plunged into a liberty without duty, without any holy background in which to recover itself, and had ended in an unbridled orgy under the ægis of the goddess of Reason, who was simply incarnate licentiousness.

Wordsworth had seen human nature let loose, and he had no wish to see anything more of the same kind. Thenceforward and on to the end, though he is ever on the side of man, his mind is haunted by the memory of that great collapse. Henceforward we detect in his message to men a spirit of caution, an appeal to make the best of what remains to us all, and can never be taken from us. He asks us to be on our guard against all violent courses. He would assure us that true freedom lies not in circumstances but in the soul; that the really good things of life are open and free to us all—the natural world, the hills, "the round ocean and the living air, and the

blue sky, and in the mind of man." That is his message in such passages as these, and one need only open his poems anywhere to find them :

> The primal duties shine aloft like stars,
> The charities that soothe and heal and bless
> Are scattered at the feet of man like flowers.

A true man, he says,

> Finds comfort in himself and in his cause,
> And while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
> His breath in confidence of heaven's applause.

> Long have I loved what I behold—
> The night that calms, the day that cheers ;
> The common growth of mother-earth,
> The humblest mirth and tears,
> These given, what more need I desire
> To stir, to soothe, to elevate ?
> What nobler marvels than the mind
> May in life's daily prospect find,
> May find or may create ?

or again :

> There's not a man
> That lives, who hath not known his godlike hours
> And feels not what an empire we inherit,
> As natural beings, in the strength of nature.

And in all these things, spoken when they were spoken, Wordsworth uttered the voice of God.

But my interest with Wordsworth just now is that he represents one abiding feature of the nineteenth-century British soul. Every man who thinks to-day and feels has already something of Wordsworth's bias in his spirit. And therefore any theory of existence and of human existence which shuts us out, or even seems to shut us out, from the wide expanses of faith and hope and love, of fancy and wonder and imagination to which Wordsworth introduced us, any theory of things which banishes us from that city of God of which he once again assured us that it was the will of God that we should be inhabitants, must reckon upon a resistance from us as resolute and even as unreasoning if need be as we manifest when some instinct within us—say the instinct of hunger or of love—is denied its satisfaction. We are what we are, and because we were born into the nineteenth century, the air we first breathed —no matter how in these immediate

days it may have been contaminated—had received a quality from Wordsworth and Coleridge and Scott which inclines us to make a certain demand of any fresh theory of life which is proposed to us. And this in a word is the demand we make, that it shall leave us free, free to believe in the significance of our life, free to make melody in our hearts unto the Lord, free to wonder, to pray, to live for some precious scruple of conscience, and to suffer if need be for the peace of God. We demand that we shall be left free to believe that our life here in this world, brief and ineffectual as it may seem, contrasted with the wide universe, and as it so often appears to ourselves to be, stands nevertheless for something in the heart of God, and is sustained by a will beyond our will—Holy, Intense, and Faithful.

> Our destiny, our being's heart and home
> Is with Infinitude, and only there ;
> With hope it is, hope that can never die,
> Effort and expectation and desire
> And something evermore about to be.

—which is but the echo of the saying of Jesus: "Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

III

The French Revolution, which at the outset sent a thrill of sympathy and expectation through our poets, soon, by its excess of riot and by its collapse under Napoleon, did much to bring about a spirit of weariness and disillusionment: as though human nature was an incurable evil, and that to remove one system of discipline was simply to introduce a state of matters in which it would be necessary to impose another, it might even be a severer, one.

Every mood is absolute so long as it lasts, and it would seem that it is never of any use to argue with a general mood so long as it is in the ascendant. It would appear that a mood, when it settles upon a people, must be allowed to run its course until it learns by its own catas-

trophe its mistake or its shortcomings. And so Amiel once wrote that progress consists of taking one thousand steps forward and nine hundred and ninety-nine back. The symbol of progress it would seem is a spiral, which returns upon itself by a long course in order to ascend a little.

After the great upheaval of the Revolution, human nature returned upon itself, and stayed indoors. There followed a period of extraordinary depression and timidity. A kind of sultry weather, with the occasional rumblings of thunder such as occur in sultry weather, lay over England. All ideals began to be suspected. A great part of the teaching of the time counselled people to practise contentment—a sullen, resigned kind of contentment. Things no doubt were bad, but they might be worse. The light of faith burned very low. Perhaps after all there was no purpose in the world. Perhaps everything obeyed a blind law of flux, of senseless action and reaction. To

crown the gloom, the country entered upon a period of acute distress.

In the year 1833 and thereabouts, even sober-minded people expected a revolution in England which might be as bloody as that in France. The bitter note in Crabbe's poetry had also awakened echoes. A mood of protest and impatience began to agitate the dumb masses of the people. The influence of the Church in England was at a very low ebb, and gave no promise of the extraordinary revival which under the Tractarians was just about to begin. The writings of the French Encyclopædists were beginning to be read, and their teaching, with its crude negations and its blasphemies, was beginning to find a hearing. Now when Atheism and Hunger meet within the soul of man, an explosion of some kind is inevitable. Most mercifully for us all, the explosion did not take place. The Manchester School, which receives to-day such ignorant discourtesies, raised a flag and kindled some warmth of hope in the

frozen hearts of the people. But, best of all, both in Scotland and in England the Church passed through a crisis which, differing indeed in almost every particular, nevertheless did inaugurate a new movement of the Spirit, and did let loose a wave of unworldliness, in which the ship of the State rounded the dangerous promontory.

One cannot read the poetry of the years long preceding the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* without feeling that the air must have been charged with the very questions and with hints of the very solutions which that book of Darwin's formally embodied. There is no other explanation of what is the fact, that every English poet from Wordsworth and Coleridge, through Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, and Clough, to Meredith and Thomas Hardy, has been engaged almost with nothing else than the ultimate matters of faith and life. And on the whole every one of these poets has delivered his message—or has sadly confessed that he has no message to deliver—with a back-

ground to all his thought of gloom or anxiety, or misgiving, or frank despair. They feel themselves to be contending, under great difficulties, for some precious belief or habit of mind of average and normal human nature. Long before 1859, when Darwin's great book was published, the poets, who at that time happened to be all of them highly cultivated men, were aware of the challenge which was being offered to the ordinary postulates and convictions of mankind. So that when the Evolution theory was launched upon the world, it did not add to the distress of our poets; it only gave body and substance to the phantoms which were already haunting their minds and causing their wings to droop.

You remember how at the close of Goethe's great work, Faust sees the vast ocean of secular knowledge rising on all sides. He sees two precious institutions of the divine spirit in man, of the divine idea which inhabits man's breast, in danger of being overwhelmed. He sees

the tide rising wildly round about a *Church* and round about a *Home*. And, you remember, Faust dies with his mind full of distress at what seems inevitable, and full of plans by which if possible the disaster may be averted. That great prophecy of Goethe's was being fulfilled —the Church and the Home, twin institutions of the Spirit, were in danger of going down under the disintegrating force of secular knowledge—so at least the greater poets of England felt from the beginning of the last century. It may be that they were foolishly alarmed. It may be that there was some immense service to the Spirit being rendered by the severe process of questioning and examination. I think there was. But it is noteworthy as indicating what is the most profound interest of our English race—namely, our faith and the nature of our security in this world—that our poets during an entire century have been even morbidly engaged with this and almost with no other task.

The first effect, however, of the publication of the Darwinian hypothesis was almost entirely to relieve the distress of the hour. After all, Evolution implied a Purpose; it promised an orderly Future. It was the affirmation of a design. A design implied a mind; and so Evolution brought back order into the world, and into men's thoughts about it. If Design can be proved, God can be inferred. Thus Darwin brought relief—relief from the dreary idea of flux, relief from the intolerable suggestion that all things are for the sake of nothing in particular, that the sun rises in order to set, and that we all live in order to wear out our boots.

It is this that accounts for the real joy with which Tennyson in the earlier period of his poetry hailed the Darwinian hypothesis, as in the lines from *The Idylls* (the Hall of Merlin):

> In the lowest, beasts are slaying men;
> And in the second, men are slaying beasts;
> And in the third are warriors perfect men,
> And in the fourth are men with growing wings.

though in his later work, in such poems as *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After*, he shrank from what he believed to be the consequences of unqualified acceptance.

And now let me, setting a hundred things aside, say here what it seems to me we may accept quite heartily and thankfully in the Evolutionary Hypothesis, leaving it to a later morning to consider those moral dangers which are apt to beset a one-sided and careless and merely materialistic understanding of the theory.

We get perhaps the safest and most comprehensive view of our life here in this world when we come to see that we are *all living upon a slope.* Life, both for the individual and for the race, is on an inclined plane, on a slope. It is because life is on a slope that we can never really do without a certain amount of effort or strain or aspiration. Because we are always upon sloping ground, we can never sit down, or take our ease, unless we are first well secured to something

which will counteract the unrelenting gravitation.

It is because this is how every one is situated—on a slope—that men who have got all they want, who have accomplished their whole ambition, become from that moment inferior men. When a man becomes proud, and satisfied with some attainment, he has there and then sat down upon the sloping way and is already slipping from his place. This you will see is a religious and Christian idea; indeed, it is the only religious idea. If we all of us had it as a fixed idea in our minds, we should know almost everything that we need to know for our guidance through this world. For if we always had it deep in our thoughts about life, that at any moment we are out upon a slope, we should have, for one thing, that wholesome sense of danger and insecurity which is a great part of human wisdom and piety.

And then again, if we had it as a fixed idea in our minds that we are always out

upon a slope, we should know, without having to be told continually, which is the safest way for men like us to have our faces turned, I mean towards the summit or towards the abyss. Further, knowing that it is easier to go down a slope than to ascend (as Virgil and every other thinker has assured us), we should learn to suspect ourselves whenever we found ourselves entirely at ease, without any purpose in our life which is taking it out of us. We should begin to have the uneasy feeling that comes over us when we are out in a boat and it is quite calm where we are, though other boats round about us are straining at their moorings—the fear, I mean, that we are being borne down by a tide; and we should on the other hand feel more secure and happy when we felt the pinch of some responsibility, the call and strain of some duty or some vision.

And finally, if we had it in our minds as the undeniable fact that we all of us spend life upon a slope, we should soon

come to see that what we all need and what we all must have if we are to live securely, is that something be let down from the top of the slope and that we lay hands upon it or attach ourselves to it. And there indeed, by the very necessities of the case, you have reached that point in your personal thinking where the religion of Jesus Christ meets you; for faith in Him is such a rope let down from above to us struggling men and women on the slope, and at the other end of the rope is God.

All this, it seems to me, is the necessary ethic and spiritual practice involved in an evolutionary view of man and life. The word Evolution is *par excellence* the word of our time. It is the torch by which men to-day follow darkly the very footsteps of God. It is a new and modern word; but really it is by no means a new way of considering life. The Bible is full of it: that man lives upon a slope, that the whole creation is climbing, or is being impelled towards its own betterment.

The Bible is full of the idea that man is from one point of view but clay, and that from that point of view you cannot describe him too meanly ; but if man climbs and has climbed, as indeed he climbs and has climbed, sometimes even on bleeding hands and knees and with great and lonely cries, it is all because there has been mixed with the clay, something which the Bible calls the Breath of God.

Meanwhile the word Evolution and the ideas which it involves are shot through all our contemporary thought—not only our pure science, but also our poetry and philosophy and the language of our faith.

The wish, that of the living whole
  No life may fail beyond the grave,
  Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
  That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
  So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
  Her secret meaning in her deeds,
  And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

. . . . .

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just!

And what is that plaintive pleading in the night but a reminiscence of St. Paul's more resolute and spacious speech? "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ. . . . For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of

God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope. . . . And the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." What is all that but a picture in words of man upon the sloping stairs of life, urged upward from within and, despite at times chafed hands and bleeding knees and moments of relenting when he would fain fall beneath himself, still confident of a destiny which will justify the long and arduous process!

But if this be the truth with regard to our position in this world, and it is the truth, many things follow. For example this follows: the important thing for man is not, where did this sloping process begin, but where by the favour of God may it not end? Let it be granted that man had the meanest of origins, that this bodily structure of ours bears evi-

dences of kinship with the ape and the fish. Let it be granted that the tenement of the body which our soul inhabits had the meanest of beginnings, what then? We are upon a slope! We have not remained on those low levels. Why did we not remain? Why did we begin to climb? "I might have been a brute," cried the poet, "but would not sink i' the scale." Now why would man not sink in the scale? Why did he begin to climb? Why not be content with the status of the ape?

For, yes, when all is said, and howsoever men may try to obscure the real heart of this matter by knowledge prostituted for their purpose, however men by much knowledge may darken counsel and depress the native energy and spiritual ambition of mankind, when all is said, the human race, lowly and mean as were its origins, left them behind, began to climb, got on to the slope, and now must either continue the ascent or else become hideous and a ruin—all because from the

beginning there was that in man, a primeval fire in the swathings of his body, which urged him out from the fellowship of all lower creatures and doomed him to be the pilgrim of eternity. As an air-bubble rises from the depths of the sea and defends itself through all its dark passage upwards till it joins the air, so was there that in man which compelled him to leave his primitive surroundings behind him, beneath him, for ever.

I believe it is well worth while saying such things, for there is spread abroad amongst us to-day a literature which seems to take pleasure in humiliating human nature, which thinks it has done a good work when it has proved that men proceeded from the original slime of the earth. But instead of concluding, as follows of necessity, that there must have been some immense energy coiled up in man which urged him out of such depths, and beseeching men to hold fast that which they have, that no man take their crown, this literature, so far as it

has any moral purpose, seems rather to teach :

> Have we risen out of the beast ?
> Then back into the beast again !

Now, I protest that that is not only bad morals, it is bad logic and bad science. You know a thing not at the beginning, but at the end. You know what is in a thing by observing what comes out of it, or what it comes to. It is to the honour of an acorn that it wants to become an oak. And knowledge, I say, is prostituted when it is used to depress the moral vitality of man, when it is used to trip him up or shame him as he makes for some higher level, by reminding him of the degraded conditions out of which he emerged. For surely men who say such things answer themselves. If man commenced his career in lowly conditions, surely it gives a hint of his true nature and moral style that he could not and would not and did not remain on that low level. In the kingdom of the Spirit we belong to the place we are seeking for. In the

charity of God we are as good as home when, though still a great way off, our faces are turned homeward.

To build a wretched doctrine of man's essential nature, to deny God and moral perfection to man as his proper aim simply because his body bears evidence of lowly relationships, is no more just than it would be to limit the true nature of any man to the level of his daily physical functions. Man eats and sleeps, it is true; but he does more than eat and sleep. He can do more. He thinks, he wills, he loves. He can give up his life for an idea. He can kneel in prayer and can rise from his knees and can endure, if need be, some intolerable pain. Man lives upon a slope; but it depends upon how your own face is turned whether you say it is a slope up or a slope down.

Finally, we may well believe, with this point of view in our mind, that a human life is a very simple thing for God to judge. We see that He must judge us, and certain words of Christ confirm us

here, not according to our position on the slope, for one may begin higher than another. No, God must judge us according to the position we have attained, compared with the position we set out from. In short, God's inquiry concerning a man is not, Where is he on the slope of moral life ? but, Where is he compared with the point he started from ?

God sees all souls not as black and white. The metaphor of colour is one which we had better abandon once for all as applicable to such a thing as a human personality. Let us rather say God sees the whole human race on the slope, and beholding them He sees that some are going up and some are going down. Some have their face toward Him, and some their back.

IV

THERE were one or two more or less definite ideas which the Evolutionary Theory seemed to convey, from which it appeared to the poets as the guardians of essential human nature, as guardians of the Divine idea in man, certain dangerous consequences might follow.

I think I can disentangle *three* such ideas, and I am sure that they are those misgivings or fears which one or other or all together often assail our heart and trouble our own outlook when we sit down and contemplate life to-day—fears and misgivings which are indeed only thoroughly solved by a vigorous faith in Christ.

Over and above the general sense of discomfort and danger to old and precious beliefs, which was bound to come with any entirely new way of interpreting life,

the theory of the world now proposed oppressed the human mind first of all with *a sense of the awful vastness of things.* " In the sea of life enisl'd . . . we mortal millions live alone." " O God, have mercy on me," cried a Breton fisherman, " thine ocean is so great, and my boat is so small."

That was one idea, one result: and it was inevitable. It has been the task of faith for many in our day to adjust themselves to a world of infinitudes—whose length and breath and depth and height are such as to make the brain ache when it tries to conceive them. The universe has got out of bounds: it has become a more difficult feat of faith and imagination for the individual to maintain his place and his self-respect in such an abysmal process.

And then, in the second place, it seemed an affront to everything sacred, and it was in contradiction to the explicit statements of general human belief *to insinuate that man as a species had affinities with*

lower creatures, and that he himself had had the lowliest origin. That I say was an idea to which men were not likely to resign themselves except under a great pressure of proof. It was a natural and proper art of self-defence, and is such still, for man to resist until resistance is no longer honest, every hypothesis which seems to cast aspersions on his nature. Truth in every region, and not only in the region of morality and religion, must be ready to suffer, to be despised and rejected of men, before it becomes embodied in the fabric of man's daily life.

And thirdly, there was a real fear on the part of the greater poets, and there is to-day a real fear on the part of all serious people, that this theory of man and things which makes the world so inconceivably vast, which gives to man such a questionable pedigree, and which has all about it as a general atmosphere the sense of physical fate and necessity—there being no room apparently left or little room for the play of free choice—

there was, I say, *the fear that the whole scheme would minister to the baser part of man's nature*, that it would weaken the force of all ancient restraints either in the name of society or in the name of religion, that it would encourage those masses of people who are meanwhile kept within bounds by some inherited scruple, to blow out their own feeble light and repudiate the hard-won wisdom of the human race.

These were the fears which were present to the greater minds of our century, and they have given direction to our entire literature and philosophy, and to the message and warnings of the Church—wherever the Church is really aware of the situation. Let me now in some detail trace the history and various expressions of those fears, and having done this, and having made one or two general reflections, let me conclude.

Those of you who know your Tennyson will recall how the idea of vastness pervades

all his work : how even his most beautiful and peaceful utterances shine rather like white sails and little islands of tender green on the bosom of a great black sea. It is that background of physical vastness which gives a quality of pathos to the whole of Tennyson's poetry. His faith indeed survives, but it survives with difficulty, and it bears many a scar from the conflict. His faith is little more than a protest and cry. The vastness and apparent heedlessness of the universe make his heart and flesh cry out. God is to Tennyson the only alternative to an otherwise too terrible state of matters.

He is oppressed also by the explanation which science offered of man's physical descent. At first he was not depressed but rather fortified in his own faith ; and the reasons which comforted him in his earlier days still stand to comfort us. He argued, quite fairly, as we did some time ago, that if man has sprung from the lowliest of origins there must always have been in him something which distinguished

him from his first companions. If man has risen, and upon this theory of his origin he manifestly has risen, it must have been because there was something in him which prompted him to rise, and enabled him to fulfil his ambition.

If that be so, then it follows that you are to look for the true nature of man not in those features which he possesses in common with the lower creatures, but in those features which he possesses in distinction from the lower creatures ; that the true nature of anything is to be found in the highest expression of itself ; in short, that a man belongs not to his past, but to his future ; not to the place he has come from, but to the place he is bound for.

For a long time Tennyson comforted himself with this dialectic, and indeed his argument stands. He edited a new moral phraseology which was based upon this aspect of the theory of Evolution. Sin was the obedience to the lower side of our nature ; holiness was obedience to the

higher side, to the protesting side. Sin was obedience to our past, holiness was obedience to our future. Sin was the hankering after the place we had come from; holiness the aspiration towards a glory which is yet to be revealed. Later on, as science became more and more thorough-going, as it became more and more materialistic, reducing all its explanations to the two categories of mechanics and chemistry—a position from which to-day it has been driven all along the line—later on, I say, as science proceeded to identify mind and will and emotion and the manifold life of the spirit with the physical brain in which all spiritual events take place, Tennyson seemed to close his heart more and more to the entire theory as though he had decided that whether true or not true, it was not the best thing for the higher aspects of man's nature to dwell upon it. And perhaps for most of us that is the safe and sensible line to take. There is no need for us saying much about it

either way. Let us, as Virgil bade Dante on the edge of the Inferno, give it one hard look and pass.

Students of Robert Browning will not need to be told that by a very similar method he drew the teeth of the Evolutionary theory. On the whole subject, I know of no profounder saying than those words of his, "'Tis downward looking makes men dizzy," an idea which he again and again repeats and illustrates, and which finds its simplest amplification in the poem *Rabbi ben Ezra*:

> Look not thou down but up
> To uses of a cup,
> The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
> The new wine's foaming flow,
> The master's lips aglow.
> Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what need'st thou with earth's wheel?

That is to say, granted we are made of clay, it must have been a very wonderful clay. We are not clay; we are men. We cannot be described as of clay in the sense that you might speak of a field as of

clay. If we are clay, then something has happened to the clay. And so let us not look down at the clay from which we came; but up to the destiny—to the finished bowl—to which we have been called, and to the high use which the Master of the feast may one day have for us.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This present, thou forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth sufficiently impressed.

Still, when all is said, it is never by mere argument that a mood is removed from the soul of a people; but only by a wind from heaven. The gravest result of the proclamation of the merely scientific theory of life is one which cannot be dealt with by way of argument; for it is intangible and pervasive. "In the world of the soul," says Faber, "there are sometimes shadows when there are no clouds." And often the soul is aware of a state of lassitude and collapse and fundamental fear even when we have

answered one by one the definite causes of our unhappiness. The gravest result of the whole scientific movement of the past century—and before that scientific movement had gathered sense and sobriety as happily it has now done, so that it is busy nowadays doing nothing else but confessing its earlier shortcomings, and shaking its head over its own youthful omniscience—the gravest result is not that it has established something which conflicts with the hypothesis of faith.

The gravest result has been the shadow, the insinuation, the very raising of ultimate questions, the disillusionment, the pathos to which it has given a name and bodily substance. All that is needed to taint sweet milk and make it useless is that a breath of foul air pass over it. St. Paul said that there were certain things which must not so much as be mentioned amongst us. The grave thing is that this has been mentioned—and having been mentioned, never again can the world be just what it was. For it is the fact that

though a building, to begin with, rests upon its foundations and upon nothing else, nevertheless as time goes on it comes to rest not only upon its very foundations : the earth round about the foundations begins to bear a certain portion of the lateral strain ; so that to remove the surrounding soil, to expose the foundations even without touching them with a spade, is always a delicate operation and one which may involve much more than could have been foreseen.

Of the Victorians, Tennyson and Browning are the two who alone may be said to have wrestled with the conclusions of materialism. Tennyson fought with a determination and sadness which gave him his message and his very genius. His conclusion, speaking generally, is that the intuitions of the heart are at least as real as the physical facts of the world.

I trust I have not wasted breath :
I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death.

Not only cunning casts in clay.
Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was born to other things.

. . . . .

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice 'Believe no more,'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

That argument, as you see, is what logicians are apt to denounce as an "argumentum ad hominem," or "ad misericordiam." Personally I do not allow myself to be bullied by this talk about the invalidity of an argument addressed to the human heart. I do not for the life of me see why, upon ultimate matters, on which it is admitted we can never arrive at a mathematical demonstration,

an argument to the heart should be less valid than an argument to the head. The heart is as truly a part of a man as the head. An argument addressed to the understanding is every bit as much an "argumentum ad hominem" as is an argument addressed to the affections or to the will. "Humanly speaking," began a student delivering an exercise to one of our theological professors. "Humanly speaking," interjected the Professor, "there is no other way of speaking." Tennyson protests against a merely chemical and mechanical universe in the name of his own warm human heart—which is not to be reduced to mere mechanism and chemistry. And there the later and wiser science of our own day supports Tennyson. If nature, life, all things have no room for the play and satisfaction of the human spirit, then this world is, as it were, the work of a mad poet who uttered things, who created things which he himself did not understand.

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
  Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
  Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed,
  And love Creation's final law—
  Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shriek'd against his creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
  Who battled for the True, the Just,
  Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more ? A monster then, a dream,
  A discord. Dragons of the prime,
  That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !
  O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
  What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil ?

That is to say, to quote some words of my own elsewhere, in Tennyson's view the alternative to Christian faith is so horrible that he shudders from it ; and I hold that in all really ultimate matters a shudder is an argument.

I close with some words of Rudolf

Eucken, whose philosophy by reason at once of its gravity and its deep hopefulness has been such a wind to many idly flapping sails. "Christianity," says Eucken—"and no other religion in this respect resembles it—has set this great mystery Love—this world-renewing fact at the very heart of life, and has undertaken to make it the controlling Power even in the sphere of our finitude. Humanity would suffer immeasurable loss, would sink to the very depths, were she willing to renounce love, even for a time. But no one is less likely to do this than the man of to-day. For the complete indifference with which nature runs her course independently of man's weal or woe stands out glaringly apparent before his very eyes, and the insufficiency, nay even the illusoriness of such love as our own humanity can bring forth is just as plain to see. If we cannot recognise the great love as the world-power, our life must inevitably lose all confidence and hope. But we are girt about by a reli-

gion which most emphatically proclaims this universal might of Love, and brings it intimately near to each one of us. And are we at the bidding of superficial reasoners to allow this splendour to be argued out of our life, cancelled and done away with, instead of hailing it with joy and carrying forward the Good News ? "

Paulsen—and I quote another great name in philosophy, were it only to pay tribute to the spirit of seriousness and concern with which great philosophy views the present situation—Paulsen quotes from a conversation which Friedrich Lange had with Ueberweg, the historian of Philosophy. I feel, said Ueberweg, in effect, I feel that all the light which we have on life—and it is all the light we need—you might get in one of the great hymns of the Church. " In which now, would you say ? " asked Ueberweg. " In ' O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden,' " replied the other (" In ' O Sacred Head once wounded ' ! ")

Life and death are the great preachers, and truly, as the same Paulsen has said, it matters not what temple science may build in this or any subsequent age, there will always need to be hard by it, a Gothic chapel for wounded souls.

V

If I were asked to name one single line of reading, after Holy Scripture, whereby a man of our day who had to preach might best equip and fortify himself, I should say unhesitatingly Robert Browning. The work of that poet has this also in addition to recommend it as I would: Robert Browning is not very easily quotable. You must put pressure upon your own brains to get the virtue out of him. With some memorable exceptions, he has no merely pretty lines with which an ingenious minister might cover up the defects of his own thinking. You have to take off your coat to Browning even as Browning took off his coat to the universe. I think it was Bishop Westcott who once said of Browning that he worked with his sleeves rolled up. I have written

elsewhere about the invaluable guidance and confirmation which that poet is so qualified to give us in the ultimate matters of faith, and if I needed any further proof that what he had to give the world was something for which the most sensitive souls were thirsting, I have had it in the numerous letters from men and women all over the world expressing our common thanks to God, that He has given to us all in these days such a fountain of strength.

There is a sense in which it is fair to say that Browning never felt the problem of life so tragically as did Tennyson, and he comes out of the conflict with fewer scars. For that very reason he is of greater service to us in defending us from the really dangerous innuendoes of materialism. There is a heartiness, an uproariousness even, of faith, in Browning, such as I know not where to look for in living men unless in Mr. Chesterton, whose writing on ultimate matters—and he never for one moment loses sight of

ultimate matters—has been of such value for minds of a certain class, and who I suspect caught the infection of his boisterous manner from Browning. I recall how some time ago, when Mr. Blatchford was contributing papers to the *Clarion* newspaper subversive of men's Christian faith, various writers replied on the Christian side. The replies were all of them excellent, careful, learned. But only Chesterton seemed to me to deal properly with his opponent. Mr. Blatchford had said something to the effect that in these days—in days which had witnessed such additions to our knowledge—in these days, no really educated man could honestly still believe. How did Mr. Chesterton reply? He said, also in effect, Well, I may not be a really educated man; but one thing is certain, I am simply *prancing with belief*. That is pure Browning.

With Browning, life was too full of the living God for him to be put off his centre by any mere post-mortem examination of the world process. There was a world

of the spirit always breaking over the threshold of his spirit. He had the simplicity and courage—for there is such a thing as having the courage of your feelings as well as having the courage of your opinions—he had the courage to call that Presence which was always lapping over the threshold of his soul—to call it God. And in a sense that was the end of it, and it is the end of it. There is no absolute demonstration of first principles, and nothing can prevent a man who has interior reasons for so doing, nothing can prevent him from holding that behind and through everything there is God.

Let me give an example—I have dealt with it at length elsewhere—an example of Browning's brisk and all the while profound apologetic. In *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, the Bishop at a certain point in his argument proceeds: "Can you promise me that if you and I banish God out of the world, we shall never be tempted to believe in Him again? No, you cannot do that. Things are always happening,

and correspondences are always being set up between those things that happen and our own deep soul. I am ready to admit, if you like, that as a believing man I am aware of many things in this life which make faith difficult. But then it is the very nature of faith that it has overcome difficulties. Faith requires difficulties to live by. 'With me, belief means perpetual unbelief kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot, who stands calm just *because he feels it writhe.*' I am quite ready to confess that as a believer such is my condition. I believe in God, and yet day by day I meet a world which in one particular or another seems to give my faith the lie.

"But how am I going to be better placed, and less divided in myself, supposing, as you suggest, I take up the attitude of denial? Supposing, I repeat, you and I from this moment resolve that we shall not believe—it is a ridiculous proposal, for it is quite impossible, but let us suppose it possible, and let us sup-

pose it done—well then, where are we? We set out upon our life to-morrow, as usual. But stop now. In the first place it is not as usual—nay, speaking for myself it is the first time I ever set out with the dreadful idea in my mind that there is no God over us. Indeed, I don't see why, if I take my own denial seriously, I should set out at all. Why should a man set out for anything, in a world which means nothing? To me it is clear that a man who thoroughly denies God, to be consistent should stay in bed. For, the moment he gets up, he accepts the whole idea of purpose in life: and if you are going to allow purpose at all you open the door once again to the Great Purpose—the Purpose which has for its end the Will of God. Still, supposing we set out, you and I, stout and thorough deniers (when to be logical, I repeat, we should be still in bed), can you promise me that throughout the whole day and throughout all the days I shall never have an experience which softens my heart and

either makes me believe or, what is very much the same, makes me wish to believe ? Ah no, you cannot do that.

"Just when we're safest, there's a sunset touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as Nature's self,
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
Round the ancient Idol, on his base again,—
The grand Perhaps ! We look on helplessly,—
There the old misgivings, crooked questions are—
This good God,—what He could do, if He would,
Would, if He could—then must have done long since !
If so, when, where, and how ? Some way must be,—
Once feel about, and soon or late you hit
Some sense, in which it might be, after all.
Why not, 'The Way, the Truth, the Life' ?

Once own the use of faith, I'll find you faith.
We're back on Christian ground.

'What think ye of Christ,' friend ? when all's done
and said,
Like you this Christianity or not ?
It may be false, but will you wish it true ?
Has it your vote to be so if it can ? "

And so he concludes the argument: "I am not in the least easier in my mind by my denial. Formerly, if you like, my

belief was put to the test by events, circumstances, points of view which threatened it; but now my unbelief is put to a continual test by events, circumstances, points of view which suggest belief. All that you unbelievers can promise is 'a life of doubt diversified by faith, for one of faith diversified by doubt.' In fact, you call the chess-board black, I call it white. In a sense we are both right; but my point is that there is only one way of regarding a chess-board if you are going to play the game, that is, if you are going to live."

But I must hasten. Let me pass away from Browning—for whose work I for myself shall never cease to give God thanks—but in passing let me repeat here two couplets of his which for the last half-hour, as I was writing these words, had been standing by my side asking me to employ them. I had to dismiss them, but I must let them speak for themselves. They are these, and I hold them to be utterances pregnant with Christianity.

First I would have you think of these words :

> The sense within me that I owe a debt
> Convinces me that somewhere must be Somebody
> waiting to have His due,

and of these :

> Wherefore, let us say, Not since we know we love,
> But rather since we love, we know enough,

—words, indeed, which St. Paul used long before him.

And now, I see that if I am to complete the purpose with which I set out, namely, to show the conflict between matter and spirit, between physics and poetry, between materialism and faith during the century, I must pass hurriedly through a list of lesser men, men who for that very reason represent, perhaps, more faithfully the effect which the challenging things of our time have had upon the masses of people of our day.

Some of us may still be able to recall the day when it was first brought home to us that the blue sky over our heads was not the solid floor of heaven, through

which at night the light shone and became evident in the stars. That faith of our childhood had to go, to make room for a faith which should be able to dwell in unity with our later knowledge. But it was a wrench at the first and it has been no easy thing ever since to be as much at home in an infinite world as in the dear small world of our childhood. Well, in various ways the world of to-day is full of the disquietude, the sorrow, the regrets, the fears, the despairs, the more anxious faith even—which, had we been old enough to know what was passing in our young hearts, we should have found there in those days when it first came home to us that we dwelt upon a tiny planet which swings through an abyss of space, an atom in an infinite system controlled by inexorable laws, by laws which make no concession to our weakness.

Face to face with this stupendous world as it has come home to our hearts in these days, men have sought refuge in various ways—both in literature, that is, in their

thoughts, and also in their practice. And I want you to hearken to these various voices, for together they form the cry which is daily becoming more articulate—the cry of our time for its ancient peace.

The total effect of the new knowledge upon Arnold and Clough is to depress their vitality. The idea of mere vastness and interminableness struck all the gaiety from their poetry. Professor James of Harvard uses an illustration which describes very powerfully how masses of men feel themselves situated to-day, and Arnold and Clough have spoken for them. Professor James pictures a great lake surrounded by the iron hills. It is frozen over, and men and women day by day skate and frolic on its smooth surface. The surface is very smooth, so smooth that the skaters can see the depths of water underneath. And this is a very terrible thing: for the ice all the time is slowly melting. The skaters all know that the ice is melting: they all know that there is no escape from their doom. They try

not to think about it, but they never quite succeed. They try to be happy in the warm sunshine, and when night comes they kindle bonfires on the ice to keep back their own deepest thoughts. But all the time the ice is melting, and each one knows, and although he says nothing about it, he knows that every other one knows.

Now if you keep that illustration before you and sit down for a little and think, you will be able to forecast how the life of our century was bound to develop, what ideas it was bound to adopt, what sorrows were bound to be its peculiar sorrows, what sins, sins with a touch of desperation in them, were bound to be its characteristic sins, and finally, if you yourselves have—as we have—some message from God for people who feel themselves to be situated thus, you will perceive whether this is a time for you to hold your peace.

I say you have need only to think of the world of modern men having such

thoughts about themselves, in order to foresee what was bound to be the line of their expression in literature and in life. For, after all, we men and women cannot for ever refuse to think about ourselves as we live in this great world. And if we spend our days upon a surface of melting ice, which is ever thinning, with the cold depths waiting to engulf us, you will not wonder at the sorrow of our century, at its anger, at its mad frivolity, at its wild and greedy clutching of momentary joy; you will not wonder at the materialism of its pursuits, at the worldliness of its policies. But at the same time you will feel what a place there is in our very day for the preaching of the gospel of the Love of God.

Now, everything that you would naturally foresee as inevitable to people so situated, as a matter of fact has occurred, and the atmosphere of our times is just the atmosphere which has been formed of such sorrows, and sins, and terrors, and anger, and final denial.

You will not wonder that amongst the masses of people who are skating on that melting ice there are those who have no heart for joy: they see too clearly the inevitable close. And so Arnold has the pathos of Virgil.

The moral drift of his teaching is in effect to say, "Yes, we may be doomed to perish, still there is something we can do: we can die like Romans, with dignity." Now and then in such poems as *Thyrsis* and *Rugby Chapel*, this merely defiant note breaks down, and Arnold joins Tennyson in something very near to tears.

As for Arthur Hugh Clough—about whom Lowell predicted that a hundred years hence he would be regarded as the poet who had most truly expressed the voice of his century—as for Clough, the idea of the mere immensity of things saddened his spirit also. For, as Hamlet said once for all, "Who would fardels bear, to grunt and sweat under a weary load but that the thought of something after death, that undiscover'd bourne from

which no traveller has returned, puzzles the will . . . and thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, and enterprises of great pith and moment, with this regard their currents turn awry and lose the name of action."

Clough, like every educated man of our time, saw so much. He saw so many reasons for doing a thing and for not doing it, that he did nothing but become the vehicle for the expression of the century's self-contradiction and moral impotence. In his best poems he is well aware that life can never have been given to us merely to speculate; that life is given us in order to live, and to live a man must commit himself:

To spend uncounted years of pain
Again, again, and yet again,
In working out in heart and brain
The problem of our being here;
To gather facts from far and near,
And knowing more may yet appear,
Unto one's latest breath to fear
The premature result, to draw—
Is this the object, end, and law,
And purpose of our being here?

And yet I do not know one single line of profounder thought or one more compact of high philosophy than a certain line from Clough. It is this: "If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars."

It was this background of doubt and fear which gave, and still gives, the Neo-Catholic movement its opportunity. Newman, Keble, and the Tractarians, whose whole movement was essentially poetical, simply refused, so to speak, to allow any ultimate question to be so much as raised.

Carlyle, whose *Sartor Resartus* is poetry, or a protest in the name of faith, and whose paraphrase of "Survival of the fittest" into "Devil take the hindmost" is itself a criticism, Carlyle got out of the "Hound's Ditch" of doubt by the way of moral action within such limits as life had left open. "O man," he growls, "who told thee that thou wast born to be happy? What if thou wast born to be unhappy? Lose thy happiness and find a greater thing, blessedness. Close

thy Byron, open thy Goethe. There is no situation in life which has not its immediate duty. Life is solved by action."

There is no doubt that Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam fell in with this mood of moral fatigue and disillusionment, in which people of the mental rank of minor poets persuaded themselves that they had tried every solution and might be excused now for not taking life seriously.

Lewis Carroll made the "beautiful digression" in the literature of the century by his gentle insinuation that the things we can *see* are the least of what we have, and that the real wonder and mystery of things lay, as Alice found, *behind the mirror* in some fourth dimension.

As for Robert Louis Stevenson, on whose message I would fain dwell, I shall content myself with my own recollection of a characteristic quotation: "In a world which is based on sacrifice, where the horse, the dog, the very insect of a

day lives and dies for a purpose beyond themselves, God forbid that it should be man, the erected, the reasoner, the wise in his own eyes—God forbid that it should be man who falters and utters the language of complaint. Let it be enough for man that the whole creation groans in moral frailty yet strives with unconquerable constancy—surely not in vain";—which was a torch lit at the great apostle's light who said long ago, "*συνκακοπάθησον ὡς καλὸς στρατιώτης Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*"—"Take thy share of hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

George Meredith boldly annexes the entire philosophy of Evolution, and declares that he finds no need for anything more. I observe, however, that the Evolution which he finds entirely satisfactory has been modified and humanised in a way which makes it something very different. Speaking for myself, I find Meredith's poetry of great comfort to me in those hours when I am already not dependent upon him for comfort. When

I am quite well he enables me to say so, and indeed to feel better; but I have never felt disposed to consult him "to minister to a mind diseased, to pluck from the brain a rooted sorrow." In such hours I find him a little strident. Certainly he is entirely free from that decadence and insincerity which lead some writers in our day to ask at great length whether life is worth living, and who arrive at the conclusion that it is not, though they still continue to write books which they suppose are worth publishing. Meredith is altogether on the side of existence, and this so far is to be on the side of God.

His appeal to us is to have no fear, to believe in what he calls *Earth*. "Earth," which I have always thought an ugly and timid word, as used by Meredith, includes spirit, purpose, and really everything which men have been in the habit of calling God.

> Into the breast which gives the rose
> Shall I with shuddering fall ?

he asks, meaning, Shall I trust myself to a system of things which is capable of adorning itself with the rose? And yet, unless our faith is true, unless we are sure of God, I should say that the presence of roses only adds to the poignancy of life and death.

But I must not disparage one who has been such a bracing influence for thousands, one who wrote:

> Our earth we have seen,
> Beneath and on surface, her deeds and designs,
> Who gives us the man-loving Nazarene,
> The martyrs, the poets, the corn, and the vines.

In Thomas Hardy's poetry, notably in a volume recently published, the worst fears of the early Victorians are fulfilled. "*Time's Laughingstocks*," he calls his latest book of verses. *Time's Laughing stocks*—that is, you and me and all of us. I recall Emerson's noble saying, "All laughter at man is hollow and of the devil."

It is a volume of ballads and stories mostly tragic, the whole spirit of the book

821608

being that we men and women are poor creatures, sensual and weak, victims of hurrying appetites which must be indulged though the indulgence brings no solid joy; that it is a shame to rob people, especially poor people, of their pitiful pleasures; that anything like a moral judgment of the human race would be a great injustice. I need not say how much of that there is in the literature and moral opinion of our time. It offers us preachers our immediate task. It forms the very basis of our vocation.

And now to conclude. There is no doubt that the whole challenge of the nineteenth century has been, and later on will be recognised to have been, good for faith; though in this region also "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous." It may very well be that in matters of faith we had all been living too luxuriously, too carelessly. The whole movement of the nineteenth century has put its restriction upon a certain excess

and overgrowth which had grown about the essential things. It has cut down a good deal of the ivy which, beautiful as it was, may have been threatening the life of the tree.

It is, for example, gain and nothing but gain for us to feel to-day that faith and personal character are organically related. The worst that science and the growth of knowledge have done is to leave the last question—as to the meaning of life—an open question. It is for us ourselves, one by one, for some reason beyond reasons, to close the question by our personal decision and vote. The century has done much to bring us back to Luther's point of view, who would "admit no disinterested knowledge" of God. We feel to-day that a man cannot have any knowledge of God *ab extra*, that is, as a mere onlooker in life. The only knowledge of God which we can claim is that private blessedness which comes of unconditional trust.

Well, the poets of the nineteenth cen-

tury did what they did to keep an open door for God. They did what they did —and I think they rendered an immense service—to keep up the claim and protest of the human heart by which we live. They had no difficulty, and the philosophers who in our day have taken up their message have had no difficulty, in showing that "man liveth not by bread only," not only by obvious utilities, but that on the contrary man does all his great and ennobling work—he marries, he labours for the establishment of his home, he plans high policies for his country, and all the way bears up against a tide of opposing things, not in obedience to any impulse which can be weighed and judged in terms of merely secular or immediate advantage, but in obedience to primitive instincts, out of loyalty to his essential nature, in obedience to some chosen faith, or to some unworldly love or sense of honour towards God—which is simply *there* and which he cannot disregard without violence to himself, and shame.

Lockhart tells a story in his Life of Sir Walter Scott with which I may decisively conclude my happy task. One night in the city of London—the night being one of most dismal fog—a man was urging his way through the darkness. A stranger to our human joys and to the inexhaustible resources of the human heart in God, in faith and imagination, would have said, beholding that wayfarer,—What a picture of man stealing through the impenetrable darkness of this world! Nonsense! The man was reciting to himself, as he went, the closing words of *Marmion*. He was keeping up his heart with a song. He was facing the darkness by the force of his indomitable soul. He had reached the line, "Charge, Chester, charge!"—the second last line of the stanza. He had just uttered the words when a voice answered him out of the darkness, completing the line, "On,

Stanley, on ! "—and another wayfarer in the fog, another pilgrim of eternity, emerged from the mist. Under a lamp they met, those two. The fog had brought them together, and the poetry. They looked into each other's face, grasped hands, and passed on, each on his own high-hearted way.

Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley, on !

That is the very function of faith. That is our task, to rally the good in the depths of men's souls.

" Ye are the light of the world," said Jesus, " Ye are the salt of the earth."

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building

form 410